

Remarks

Claims 1-26 are currently pending in this application. Claims 14-22 and 25-26 have been cancelled without prejudice. Applicants hereby reserve the right to prosecute cancelled claims 14-22 and 25-26 by way of a divisional application.

The Examiner asserts that the present application contains claims directed to six patentably distinct species and has required an election under 35 U.S.C. § 121 of the following species of the claimed invention:

Species I - shown in Figs. 1-4 (relating to claims 1-6, 8-13 and 23);
Species II - shown in Fig. 5 (relating to claims 4 and 23);
Species III - shown in Fig. 6 (relating to claims 5 and 23);
Species IV - shown in Fig. 7 (relating to claims 7, 23 and 24);
Species V - shown in Figs. 8-8a (relating to claims 14-22); and
Species VI - shown in Figs. 9-10 (relating to claims 14-22 and 25-26).

The Examiner has determined that claim 1 is generic and has required that Applicants elect a single species for initial examination on the merits. Applicants hereby elect with traverse Species I shown in Figs. 1-4. Claims 1-6, 8-13 and 23 are readable on this elected species.


Applicants respectfully traverse the species election requirement relating to Species I-IV on the grounds that Species I-IV relating to claims 1-13 and 23-24 will not broaden the search obligation. The claims represented by Species I (Figs. 1-4) also include the claims readable on Species II (Fig. 5) and Species III (Fig. 6). The claims readable on Species IV (Fig. 7) that are not included in the Species I claims include claims 7 and 24. These relatively minor variations in the invention shown in Fig. 7 will not require a broader search. All prior art will need to address the invention shown in Figs. 1-4 to be pertinent in the first place. Whether such prior art references also refer to the invention shown in Fig. 7 will involve only subset search considerations, not a broader search. Accordingly, withdrawal of the Species Election Requirement is respectfully requested.

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Applicants hereby reserve the right to prosecute non-elected claims 7 and 24 by way of a divisional application filed at a later time. Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.48(b), there is no change in inventorship as a result of this election or the cancellation of claims 14-22 and 25-26.

Respectfully submitted,

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